

# Statement of Values on Recognition of Intellectual Contributions

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## Preamble

The MGH MRI Research facility provides a state-of-the-art platform as well as a slew of tools to empower researchers to carry out their important work. The researchers may join us with their own ideas, may bring with them the contributions of others, and may seek out contributions from our facility above and beyond the standards of service. As a central tenet of academic research, we believe in recognition of intellectual contribution. The purpose of this document is to outline our values and expectations as a center, and request that our users acknowledge these values and aim to respect them in their work with us.

## Definition of Intellectual Contribution

Intellectual contribution is an act that increments the overall intellectual value of a work. This is contrasted with practical contribution—such as assistance in a pre-defined process, whether pre-defined by the Beneficiary (the person that benefits from the contribution) or the Contributor. It is also distinct from pedagogical contribution, which involves providing training and education to advance a work. It is also valuable to distinguish it from applications of pre-existing intellectual property, such as implementation of a known solution.

We therefore take intellectual contribution to mean an act that increments the value of a work through the provision of *novel* solutions that require one to go beyond the Standards of Service to provide.

## Standards of Service

Each user at the MGH Research facility has access to a certain amount of consulting time. This time may be used to recruit the assistance of the Platform Manager. At times, additional consultation of the Scientific Officers (e.g. Platform Manager, Director, Associate Director, Engineers, etc.) may be needed as well. The contribution of these staff to setting up of a research program are considered to be Standard of Service and not an intellectual contribution by our staff. An important qualifier, and one that is consistent with the definition above, is that our staff are assisting Users in implementing existing solutions and not creating *novel* solutions for a User. The provision of a novel solution may be deemed an intellectual contribution.

## Recognition of Prior Contributions

Users may have benefited from the intellectual contributions of others prior to joining our facility, consistent with the definition above—that an expert contributed more than their Standard of Service to provide novel solutions to a user's problem. We hold that these are also deemed intellectual contributions to the research and merit recognition.

## Original Intended Value

The act of recognition of someone's intellectual contribution is to make it known in a manner that is consistent with the *intended* value of the contribution. The reason we emphasize *intended* is that novel solutions—the kind that make for intellectual contribution—necessarily require some trial and error, and it is possible that some of those intended solutions do not get fully implemented in the final work. Yet the *effort* itself was what led to the implemented work. Therefore, intellectual contributions should be valued *before* the undertaking rather than post-hoc.

## Recognition

To recognize is to make it known—to be transparent about who contributed to the final work. The manner of recognition ought to be satisfactory to both the Beneficiary and the Contributor. In the event that an existing agreement on the recognition is not known at the onset of an undertaking, both sides must engage in good faith to come to an agreement, and the Scientific Officers of the MGH MRI Research Facility may contribute to achieve a just agreement.

There are two specific cases where we believe recognition ought to occur:

1. Contribution by our staff—if a staff or officer has gone above the Standard of Service to contribute a novel solution to a work, the researchers ought to recognize that contribution, possibly with co-authorship or at a minimum with acknowledgements on papers.
2. Contribution by other centers—when a researcher brings intellectual contributions made elsewhere, it is important for us to know that and to also know that the original contributor is adequately recognized.
3. Contribution by other users—when a Platform User brings intellectual contribution to the project of another user, it is important that they discuss the contribution and ensure that the contribution is properly recognized.
4. Collegiality—we expect that all our staff and Users commit to an atmosphere of collaboration, where we work together to help one another find solutions to complex problems.

## Impact and Importance

Our staff and those of other centers actively strive to advance their understanding and skills to provide excellent service and useful assistance to researchers. Users may contribute important intellectual assets to the project of other users. When they are needed to go above the Standard of Service, their contribution must be justly recognized as this is central to our academic conduct.

As a research center, we strive to advance the values and principles of academic conduct, and it is important that we make our values clear to our researchers so that we can work together and advance their research with mutual appreciation, full transparency, and total integrity.